

Cape Girardeau Urban Wild Acres

Cape LaCroix Bluffs Conservation Area

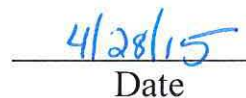
Cape Woods Conservation Area

Juden Creek Conservation Area

Ten Year Area Management Plan FY 2015-2024




Wildlife Division Chief


Date

Cape Girardeau Urban Wild Acres Management Plan Approval Page

PLANNING TEAM

Bruce Henry, Natural History Biologist

Matt Bowyer, Wildlife Regional Supervisor

Rocky Hayes, Urban Forester

Brad Pobst, Private Land Conservationist

Kyle Booth, Conservation Agent

Chris Kennedy, Fisheries Regional Supervisor

Joe Garvey, Forestry Regional Supervisor

SOUTHEAST REGION

RCT Chair


Signature

April 10, 2015
Date

WILDLIFE DIVISION

Unit Chief


Signature

April 22, 2015
Date

OVERVIEW

Area Name	Area Number	Year Acquired	Acreage	County	Administrative Responsibility	Maintenance Responsibility
Cape LaCroix Bluffs Conservation Area (CA)	200709	2006	63.2	Scott	Wildlife	Wildlife
Cape Woods CA	9505	1994	36.7	Cape Girardeau	Wildlife	Wildlife
Juden Creek CA	9203	1991	8	Cape Girardeau	Wildlife	Wildlife

Statements of Purpose:

A. Strategic Direction

Maintain and enhance natural communities on the areas; work to recover species of conservation concern; and provide interpretational and recreational opportunities that are compatible with the natural resources at the areas.

B. Desired Future Condition

The desired future landscape conditions of Cape LaCroix Bluffs Conservation Area (CA), Cape Woods CA, and Juden Creek CA are forested urban wild areas that provide recreational opportunities through the trail systems; including the Cape LaCroix Recreational Trail and other area trails. These areas are intended to complement conservation stakeholder lands adjoining the areas to facilitate various outdoor recreational opportunities with limited infrastructure commitments. Wetlands present on the area should be managed passively, mimicking natural hydrologic functions; providing the wetland resources necessary to promote the recovery of species of conservation concern and the life history requirements of wetland species.

C. Federal Aid Statement

N/A

GENERAL INFORMATION AND CONDITIONS

I. Special Considerations

Area Name	Priority Area	Natural Area
Cape LaCroix Bluffs CA	Cape Hills Conservation Opportunity Area (COA)	None
Cape Woods CA	None	None
Juden Creek CA	Cape Hills COA	Vicinity of Kelso Sanctuary Natural Area (NA)

II. Important Natural Features and Resources

Area Name	Species of Conservation Concern	Caves	Springs
Cape LaCroix Bluffs CA	Yes ¹	None	Yes
Cape Woods CA	None	None	None
Juden Creek CA	Yes ¹	None	None

¹ Species of conservation concern are known from this area. Area managers should consult the Natural Heritage Database annually and review all management activities with the Natural History Biologist.

III. Existing Infrastructure

Area Name	Privy	Developed Trail	Parking Area #
Cape LaCroix Bluffs CA	None	Unnamed area trail	1
Cape Woods CA	1	Cape LaCroix Recreational Trail	1
Juden Creek CA	None	Unnamed area trail	1

IV. Area Restrictions or Limitations

Area Name	Deed Restrictions	Federal Interest	Easements	Cultural Resources	Hazards	Endangered Species	Boundary Issues
Cape LaCroix Bluffs CA	None	None	Access easements to area ¹	None known	High bluffs	Yes ³	None
Cape Woods CA	None	None	Yes ²	None known	None observed	None observed	None
Juden Creek CA	None	None	None	None known	None observed	None observed	None

¹ Three separate access easement agreements recorded.

² Fifteen foot wide sewer easement runs on western side of property.

³ Endangered Species are known from this area. Area Managers should consult the Natural Heritage Database annually and review all management activities with the Natural History Biologist.

MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS**V. Terrestrial Resource Management Considerations**

Management of Cape LaCroix Bluffs, Cape Woods, and Juden Creek Conservation Areas focuses on enhancing or maintaining the cover types and natural communities present on the areas. All three areas are predominantly forested areas with management intent to sustain the existing forest cover and forest health.

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) Maintain stakeholder associations to promote area recreational opportunities for area users.
- 2) Monitor, identify and address invasive species infestations.
- 3) Promote diverse forest and woodland natural communities.

Management Objective 1: Maintain diverse forested landcover including bottomland forest and western mesophytic forest communities present.

Strategy 1: Utilize forest management practices such as timber stand improvement, underplantings, and tree plantings to promote diverse tree species compositions (Wildlife).

Strategy 2: Conduct invasive species control operations as pertinent to maintain natural community health (Wildlife).

Management Objective 2: Provide for recreational area uses balanced with natural community and habitat management.

Strategy 1: Provide recreational trail systems and maintain them for area users both passively managed area trails and the Cape LaCroix Recreational Trail (Wildlife).

Strategy 2: Provide hunt programs where appropriate (Wildlife).

Strategy 3: Eliminate unnecessary mowing and promote diverse wildflower, native grass or shrub plantings (Wildlife).

Management Objective 3: Promote the management of surrounding properties through agreements and cooperative initiatives.

Strategy 1: Collaborate with surrounding landowners to expand management opportunities on the landscape proximal to the conservation areas (Wildlife).

VI. Aquatic Resource Management Considerations

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) Allow or simulate natural hydrologic functions.
- 2) Manage wetland resources passively as appropriate.
- 3) Monitor streambank erosional areas and mitigate where appropriate.

Management Objective 1: Wetland resources include stream systems, buttonbush shrub swamp wetland communities, riverfront forest and minor springs. Management of those resources should be accountable to Missouri Department of Conservation (Department) Best Management Practices.

Strategy 1: Utilize Best Management Practices for aquatic species of conservation concern where appropriate (Wildlife).

Strategy 2: Utilize Best Management Practices for stream systems to maintain the integrity of stream resources on the areas (Wildlife).

Management Objective 2: Manage wetland resources to promote the recovery of species of conservation concern and the habit of a variety of wetland wildlife.

Strategy 1: Maintain wetland features necessary for species of conservation concern (Wildlife).

Strategy 2: Monitor populations of species of conservation concern and other wildlife (Wildlife).

Strategy 3: Provide wetland habitats that mimic conditions created by natural disturbance regimes (Wildlife).

VII. Public Use Management Considerations

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) Provide trail use opportunities for area users.
- 2) Inform the public of opportunities available at these areas.
- 3) Maintain areas in desirable condition.

Management Objective 1: Maintain suitable public access and interface at each area.

Strategy 1: Stabilize erosional areas on hiking trails (Wildlife).

Strategy 2: Maintain signage at the areas in accordance with Department policy (Wildlife).

Strategy 3: Promote the three areas through outreach opportunities (Wildlife).

Management Objective 2: Sustain stakeholder agreements to promote cooperative opportunities for area use and management.

Strategy 1: Develop and maintain agreements with cooperators to maintain trail systems, promote area user access, and support natural community management strategies (Wildlife).

VIII. Administrative Considerations

Challenges and Opportunities:

- 1) Ensure all easements and agreements are properly documented and filed.
- 2) Evaluate land offered as additions to these areas.

Management Objective 1: Maintain easements and agreements and ensure they are properly filed.

Strategy 1: Continue to maintain existing agreements and easements with conservation cooperators essential to the operations of these areas (Wildlife).

Management Objective 2: Consider area expansion where appropriate and feasible.

Strategy 1: Collaborate with adjoining interested landowners and agencies to develop area expansion possibilities (Wildlife).

Lands Proposed for Acquisition:

When available, adjacent land may be considered for acquisition from willing sellers. Tracts that improve area access, provide public use opportunities, contain unique natural communities and/or species of conservation concern, or meet other Department priorities, as identified in the annual Department land acquisition priorities, may be considered.

MANAGEMENT TIMETABLE

All strategies outlined in plan are under the responsibility of the Wildlife Division. Strategies are considered ongoing unless listed in the following table:

	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Terrestrial Resource Management										
<i>Objective 1</i>										
Strategy 1		X								
Strategy 2	X		X							
Public Use Management Considerations										
<i>Objective 1</i>										
Strategy 1		X								

APPENDICES

Public Input Summary:

The draft Cape Girardeau Urban Wild Acres Management Plan was available for a public comment period September 1–30, 2014. The Missouri Department of Conservation received comments from one respondent (Appendix A). The Cape Girardeau Urban Wild Acres Planning Team carefully reviewed and considered these ideas as they finalized this document. A brief summary of public input themes, including how they were incorporated or why they were not, can be found below. Rather than respond to each individual comment, comments are grouped into general themes and are addressed collectively.

Department responses to themes and issues identified through Cape Girardeau Urban Wild Acres public comment period

Appreciates walking and biking on the Cape LaCroix Hiking/Biking Trail (trail passes through Cape Woods CA).

Trail upkeep and maintenance is very important within Cape Girardeau Urban Wild Acres due to the large percentage of users relying on these recreational trails. Trail maintenance is included in the Area Plan under section VII, and will continue to be a focal point of area management.

Supports area management plan and the partnership between Southeast Missouri Regional Port Authority (SEMO Port) and the Missouri Department of Conservation (Cape LaCroix Bluffs CA).

SEMO Port has been an excellent partner and neighbor over the years, cooperating on the improvements and conservation at Cape LaCroix Bluffs Conservation Area. MDC hopes to continue this partnership long-term so future generations have an opportunity to experience this small, but ecologically and geologically important natural community.

Appendices:

Appendix 1. Map of Cape LaCroix Bluffs CA

Appendix 2. Cape LaCroix Bluffs CA Area Background

Appendix 3. Map of Cape Woods CA

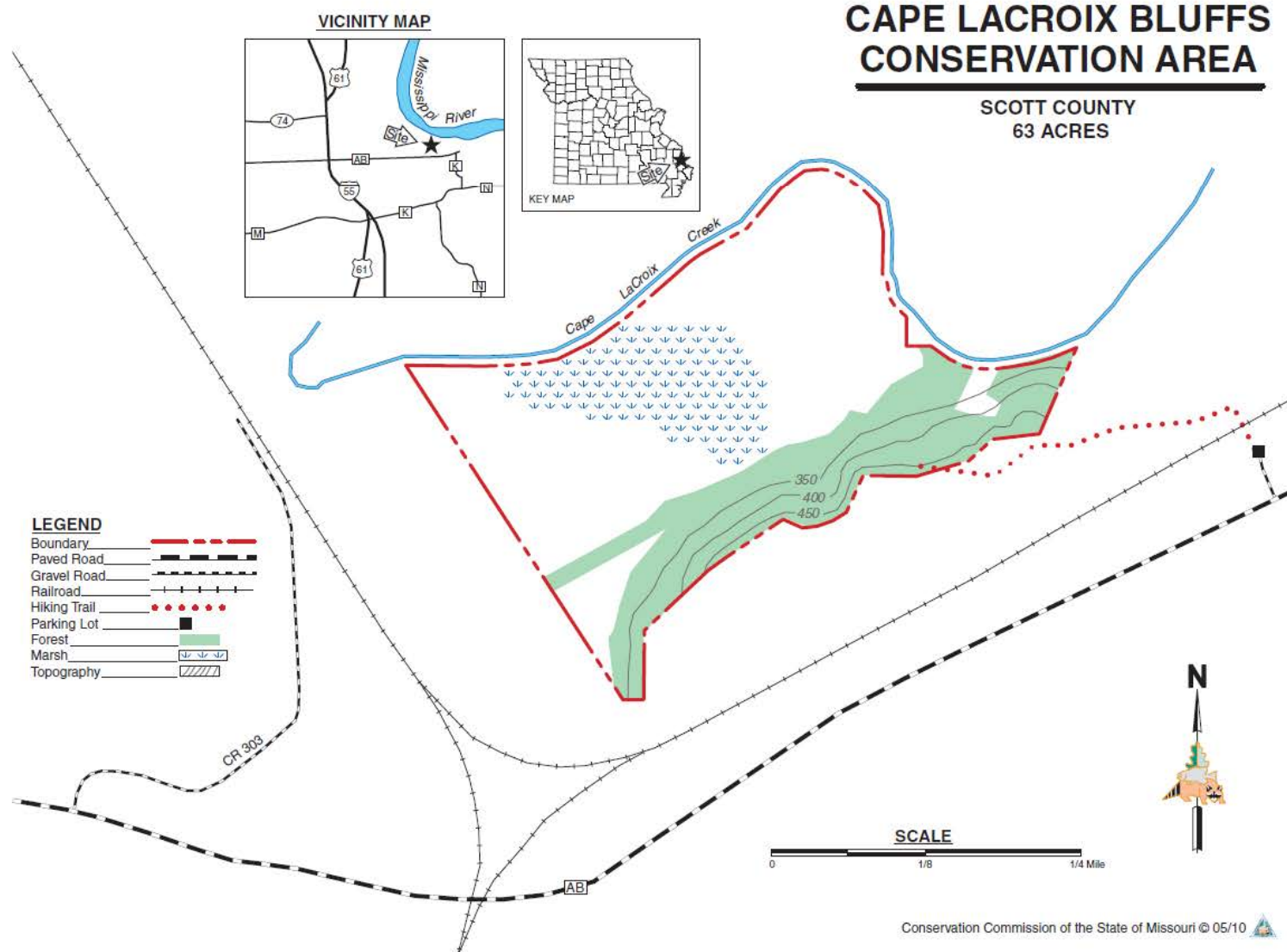
Appendix 4. Cape Woods CA Background

Appendix 5. Map of Juden Creek CA

Appendix 6. Juden Creek CA Background

Appendix 7. Draft Cape Girardeau Urban Wild Acres Management Plan Public Comments

Appendix 1. Map of Cape LaCroix Bluffs CA



Appendix 2. Cape LaCroix Bluffs CA Background

Cape LaCroix Bluffs CA is located in close proximity to the Diversion Channel and Southeast Missouri Regional Port Authority. The conservation area is bordered by the former channel of Cape LaCroix Creek, the creek system that passes through the city of Cape Girardeau. Today the remnant channel of Cape LaCroix Creek persists on the area as a buttonbush shrub-swamp and a floodplain pond. The area also supports limestone bluffs of the Benton Hills, a landform of the Illinois Ozarks that was cutoff by historical and geologic catastrophic changes in the Mississippi River's flow. Cape LaCroix Bluffs provides overlooks of the Mississippi River; supports steeply dissected wooded slopes and bluffs; and affords important wetland habitats and karstic resources for aquatic organisms and wildlife.

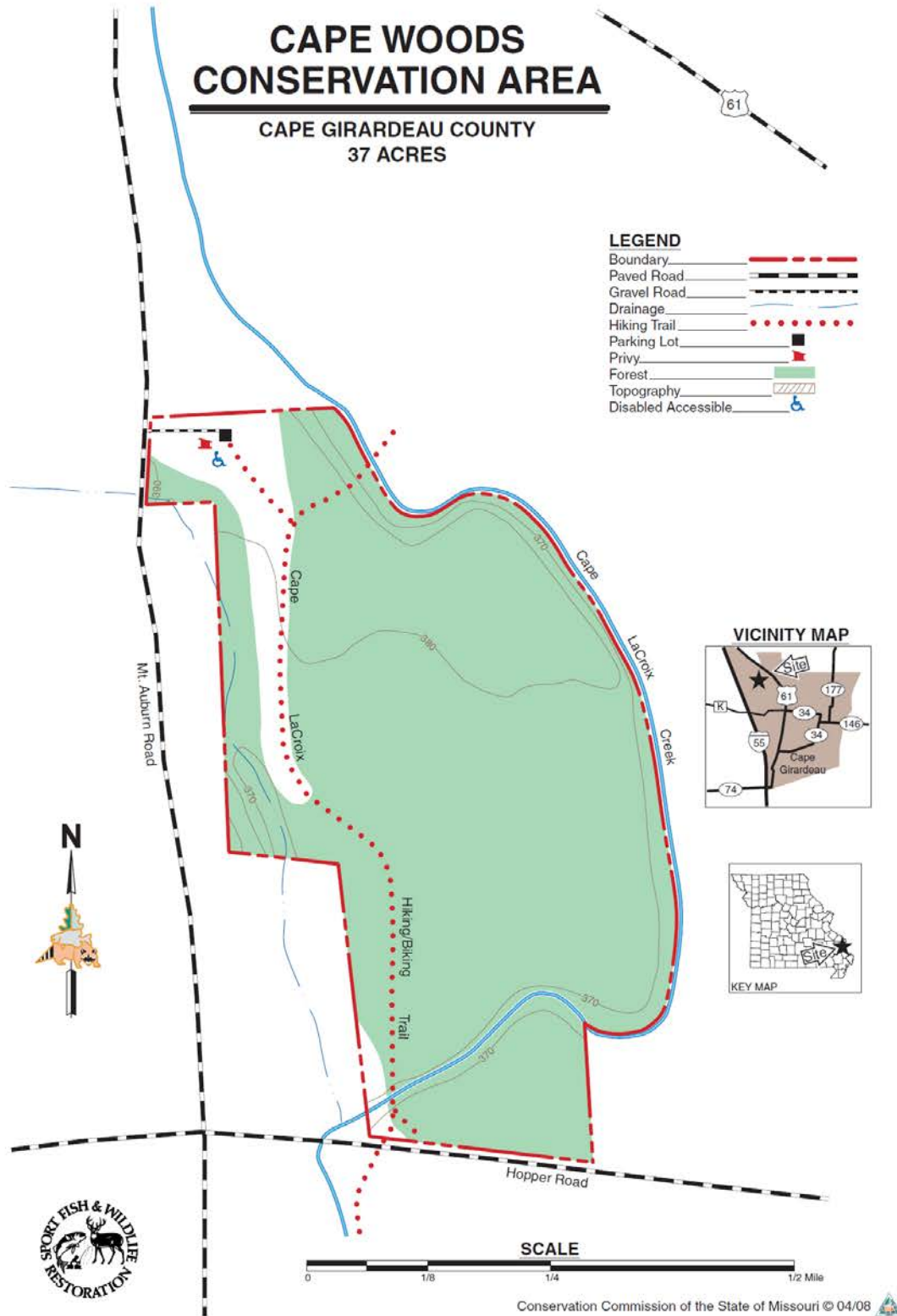
Legal Description: Township 30 North, Range 14E, Section 29.

Area Location: Cape LaCroix Bluffs CA is located off Nash Road, just south of the Diversion Channel in Scott County. From I-55, take exit 91, travel east on Route AB (Nash Road). The parking area for Cape LaCroix Bluffs CA is located just before the intersection of Route K and Route AB (Nash Road). The parking area is north of Nash Road, west of the K and AB intersection, and readily observable from the roadway.

Current Land and Water Types:

Land/Water Type	Acres	% of Area
Wetland	30	47
Seasonally flooded openlands	8.21	13
Forest	25	40
Total	63.21	100

Appendix 3. Map of Cape Woods CA



Appendix 4. Cape Woods CA Background

Cape Woods is an important urban wild acres area within the City of Cape Girardeau. Cape Woods is integral to the Cape LaCroix Recreational Trail; the trail passes through the area as it winds its way through the city. This area was purchased to promote recreational opportunities and to support the initiative of the City of Cape Girardeau during the development of the Cape LaCroix Recreational Trail. Cape LaCroix Creek passes through the area and, in part, forms the eastern boundary of the area. Public restrooms and the hiking trail are maintained cooperatively with the city's parks department.

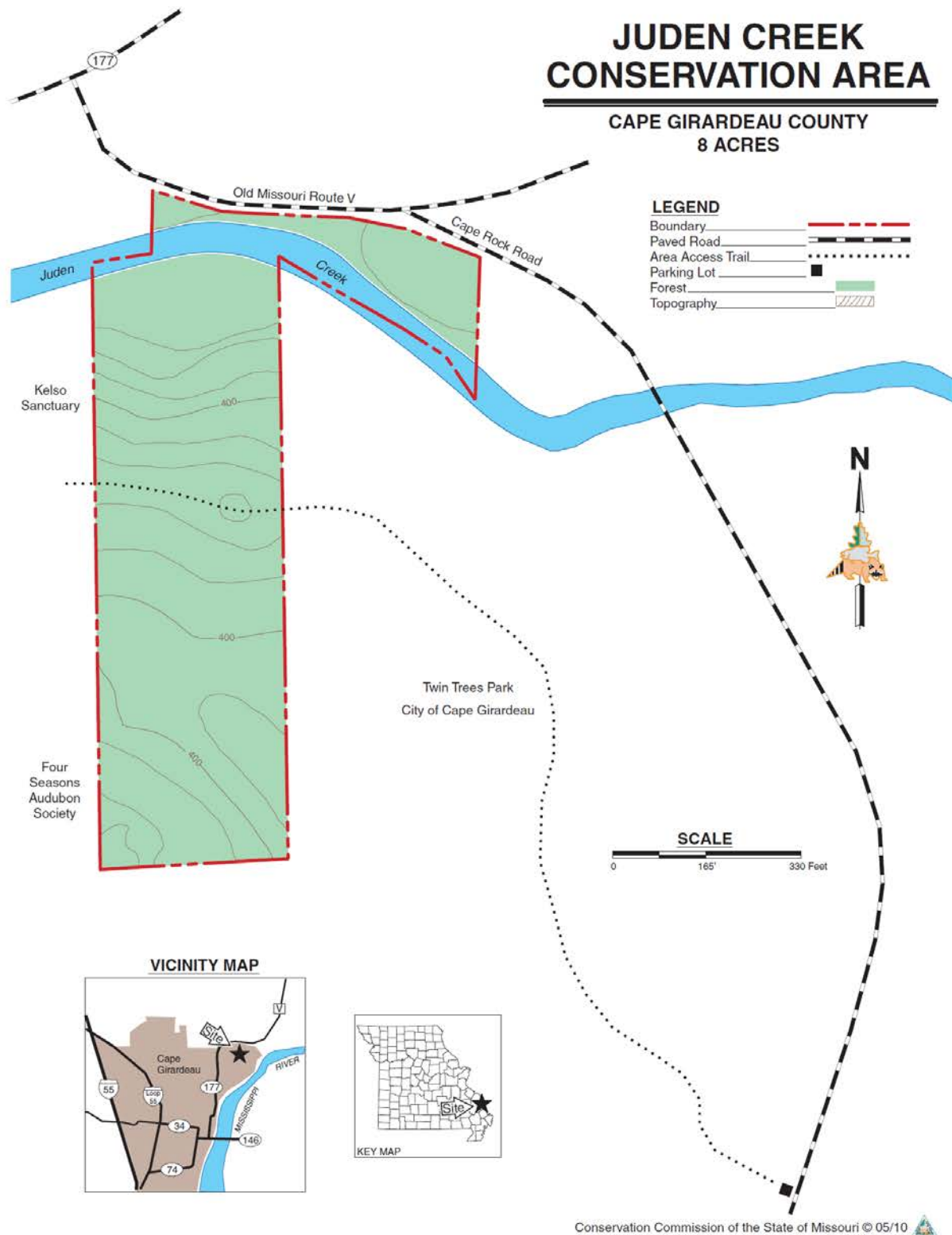
Legal Description: Township 31 North, Range 13E, Section 26.

Area Location: Cape Woods is located within the city limits of Cape Girardeau; adjoining Mt Auburn and Hopper Roads. At the intersection of Kingshighway (Business 55/61/34) and Mount Auburn Road, turn south on Mount Auburn Road. Turn into the parking area, south of the car wash, on the east side of the road. The area can also be accessed from the Osage Park and Community Center on Kingshighway and via the Cape LaCroix Recreation Trail.

Current Land and Water Types:

Land/Water Type	Acres	Miles	% of Area
Forest	30		81
Open	7		19
Total	37		100
Stream Frontage		1	

Appendix 5. Map of Juden Creek CA



Appendix 6. Juden Creek CA Background

Juden Creek Conservation Area is an eight acre area situated in proximity to Twin Trees Park, Kelso Sanctuary NA, and properties owned by Southeast Missouri State University. Juden Creek passes through the area just before the creek dumps into the Mississippi River. Juden Creek CA is mostly mesic forest with beech and tulip poplar and inclusions of woodland on the highest stations. A trail passes through the area from the parking lot in Twin Trees Park along Cape Rock Road; the trail traverses through Kelso Sanctuary Natural Areas and is visited often by students from Southeast Missouri State University.

Legal Description: Township 31 North, Range 14E, Section 21.

Area Location: Juden Creek Conservation Area is located off Highway 177 at the northern city limits of Cape Girardeau. From Hwy 177, turn east on Old Missouri Route V, and then turn south (crossing Juden Creek) on Cape Rock Road, continue to the parking lot 125 yards past the Juden Creek bridge.

Current Land and Water Types:

Land/Water Type	Acres	Miles	% of Area
Forest	8		100
Stream Frontage		0.20	

Appendix 7. Draft Cape Girardeau Urban Wild Acres Management Plan Public Comments

Received during public comment period (September 1-30, 2014)

MDC has done a very good job preparing the management plan, particularly the Cape LaCroix Bluffs Conservation Area which adjoins Semo Port.

MDC has coordinated its development plans with those of Semo Port and we look forward to continuing these efforts in the future.

We believe the Port's transportation and economic development can be done in a manner that protects the unique and valuable habitat at Cape LaCroix Bluffs.

The Port has assisted MDC in providing a parking area and trail from Route AB to MDC's hilltop area. Other aspects of the Port's infrastructure plans have been tailored to fit with MDC plans.

Let me add that my wife and I really enjoy walking and biking on the Cape trail.

Thanks